

# Birth of Jesus

- c. 4 BC
- Tradition says in Bethlehem
- A Jew living in a province of the Roman Empire



# Jesus' Ministry

- Around age 30, Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist
- For several years he was a traveling teacher and healer
- He declared that the “Kingdom of God” was coming



## Sermon on The Mountain

### “Kingdom of God”



“Do to others what you would have them do to you”

“Be like a wise man who builds his house on the rock”

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of god”

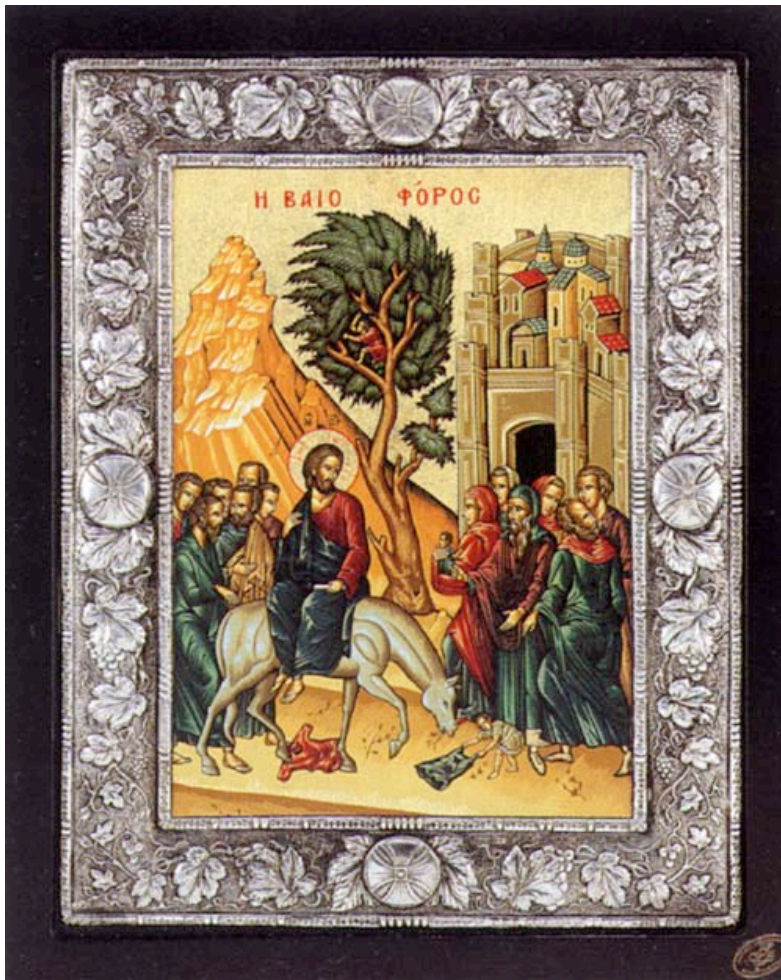
“The Meek shall inherit the earth”

“Do not think I have come to abolish the laws of the prophets”



# Last Days in Jerusalem

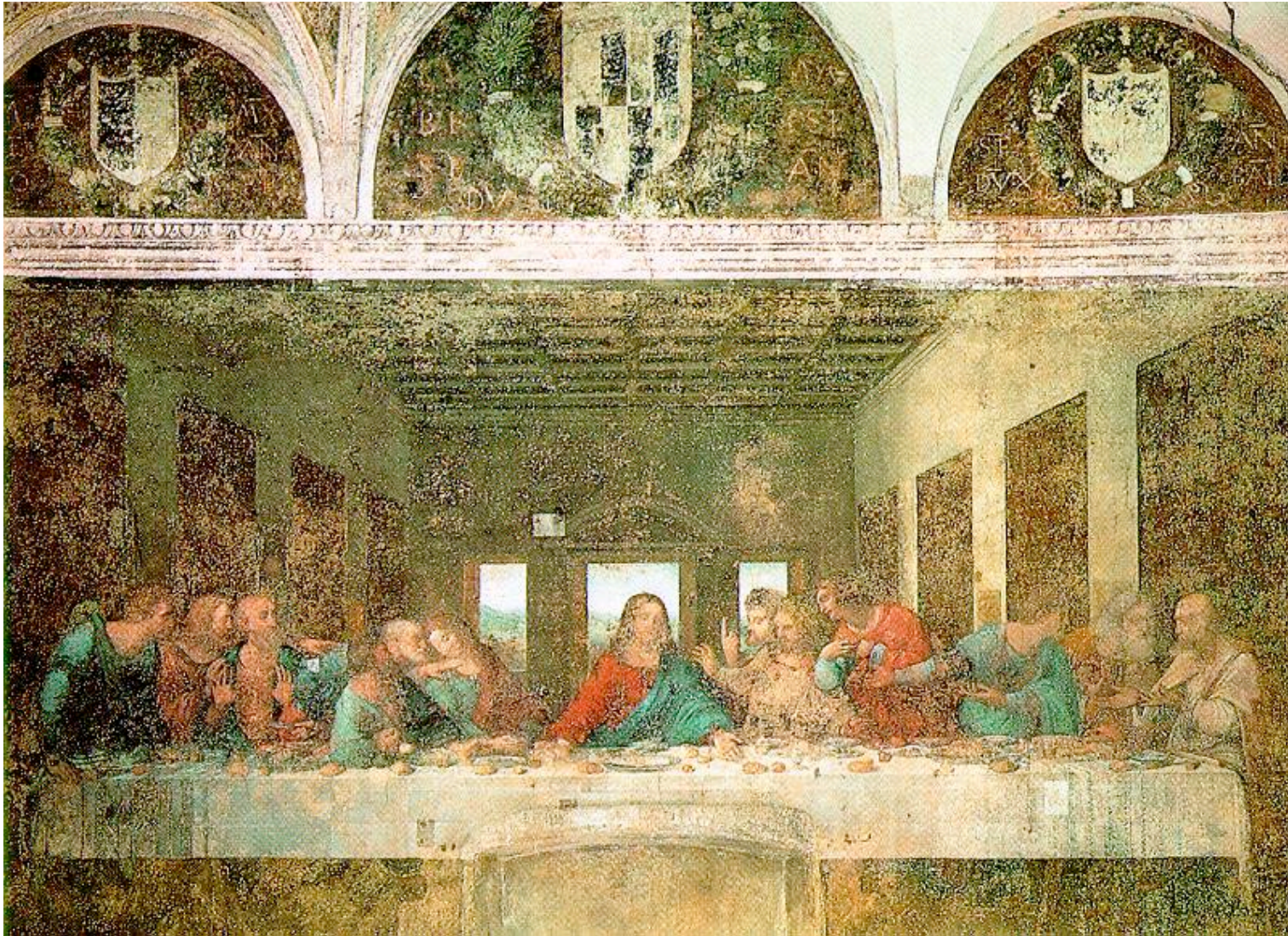
- Jesus was met by cheering crowds as he entered Jerusalem for the Passover
- He created a major disturbance in the temple, which attracted the attention of the authorities





# The Last Supper

- Jesus celebrated the Passover meal with his 12 disciples
- He predicted his own coming death





# Arrest & Trial

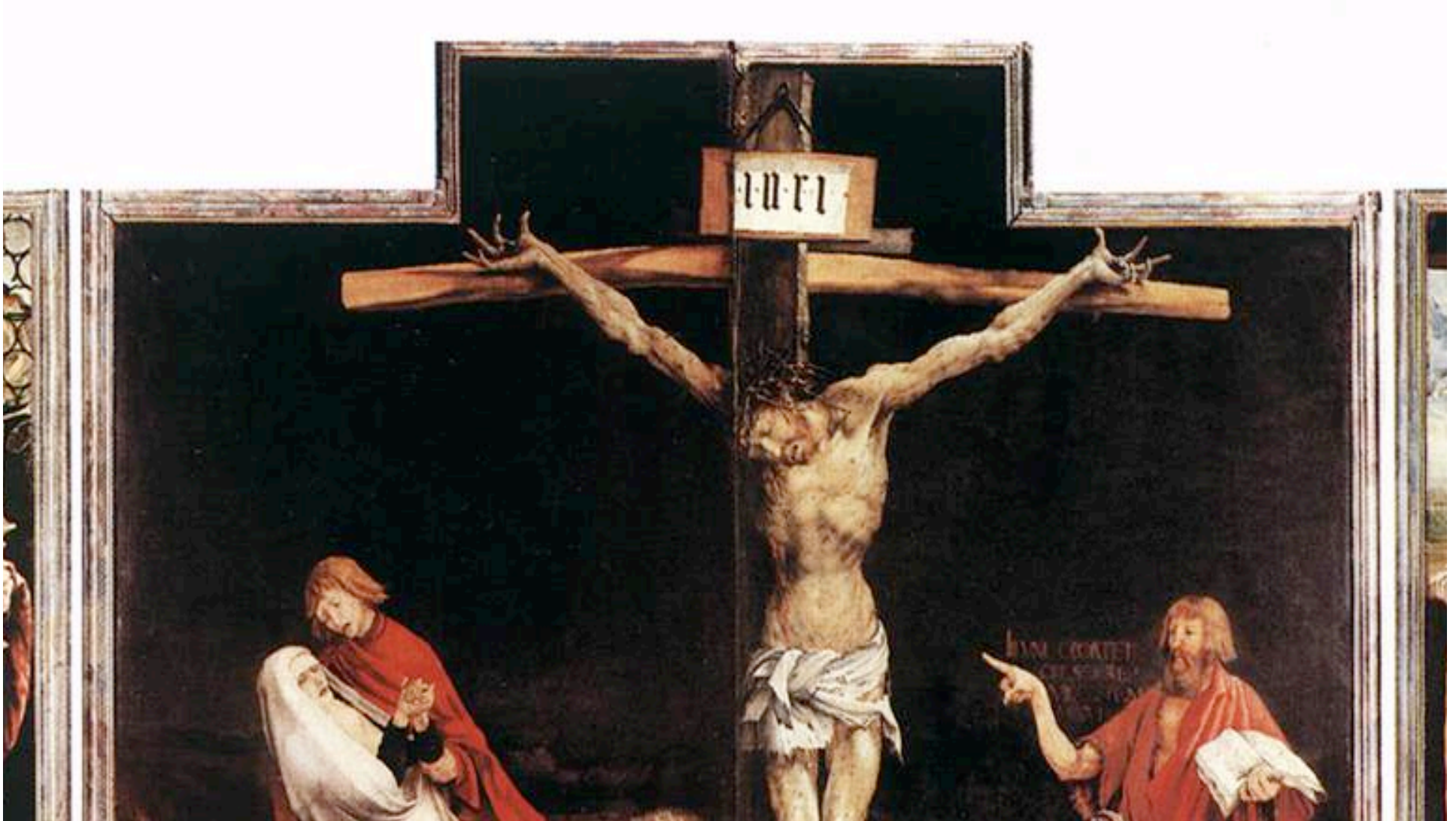
- After the Last Supper Jesus was arrested by the Romans
- Several gospels describe a preliminary trial before the Jewish priests
- All the gospels depict a final trial before Pontius Pilate, Roman governor of Judaea
- Pilate ordered Jesus executed by crucifixion





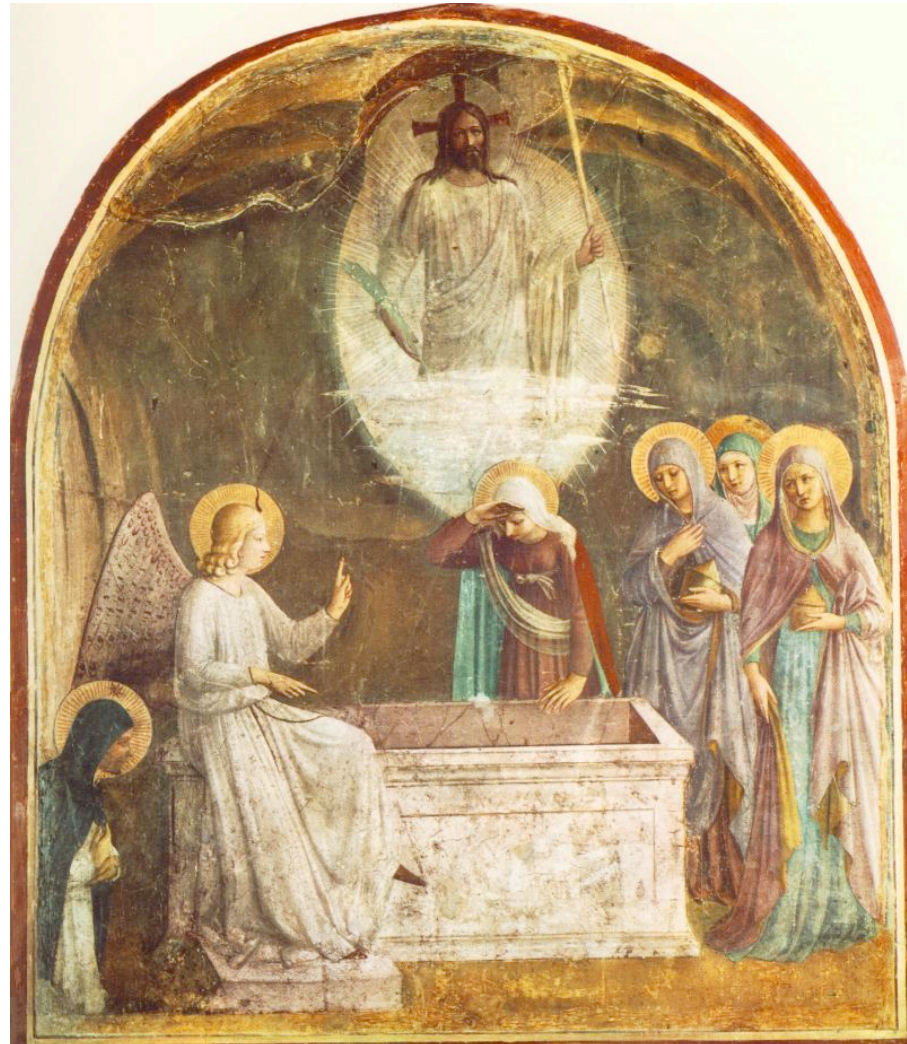
# The Crucifixion

- Jesus was killed using the Romans' most brutal form of public execution
- According to the gospels, almost all of his followers abandoned him



# The Resurrection

- On the third day after his burial, Jesus' tomb was found empty
- He appeared to numerous disciples
- He ascended to heaven and his disciples began to spread his message





# Spread of Christianity

- The disciples plus a new convert named Paul became *apostles* who spread the *gospel* (“good news”) about Jesus
- The new religion spread more quickly among Gentiles than Jews (monotheism without the Judaic law)
- Within a few centuries Christianity became the dominant religion in the Roman Empire





## The Trinity

- Christians came to see God as one Three-In-One
  - The Father = Creator
  - The Son = Redeemer
  - The Holy Spirit = Sustainer
- The doctrine of the trinity is a “mystery” of faith





# The Bible

39 books from Jewish scriptures = *Old Testament*

27 books from early church leaders = *New Testament*



# Roman Catholic tradition

- In the 4th century AD, Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire
- Roman Catholic Church is still the largest single Christian denomination
- Authority on matters of belief and practice rests with church hierarchy; the Bishop of Rome - the Pope - is at the top
- Emphasis on the sacraments as a means of receiving God's grace





# The Orthodox Tradition

- Main form of Christianity in Greece and Russia (“Eastern Orthodox”)
- Different church calendar, no pope, married priests, **icons**



# The Protestant tradition

- Began with Martin Luther in 16th century Germany
- Emphasis on authority of the Bible and the individual conscience, not church hierarchy or tradition
- Subdivided into hundreds of denominations





# SEVEN SACRAMENTS\*

Baptism

Confirmation

Holy Eucharist

Penance

Anointing of the Sick

Holy Orders

Matrimony

\* Christian churches vary in the number of sacraments they observe and the manner in which they observe them

# Examples of variation in the sacraments

## BAPTISM



## COMMUNION





# WORSHIP

Christian worship services come in many styles, from highly ritualized, scripted, and formal to casual, expressive, and informal.



A typical mainline Protestant worship service focuses on the minister's sermon.



A typical Roman Catholic or Episcopal worship service focuses on the liturgy of the mass.



A typical Pentecostal or charismatic worship service focuses on praise and ecstatic "speaking in tongues."

# ADVENT & CHRISTMAS

- Four Sundays before Christmas the Advent season begins. A new candle is lit each week in anticipation of the birth of Jesus, the "light of the world."
- Christmas Day, the commemoration of Jesus' birth, is celebrated December 25.





# LENT & HOLY WEEK



40 days before Easter, the season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday.



Palm Sunday comes one week before Easter.



Good Friday, just before Easter, commemorates the crucifixion.



Easter is the most important Christian holiday, celebrating the resurrection of Jesus. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem is said to mark the spot of Jesus' empty tomb.

# The spectrum of belief

- Christians today represent a wide spectrum of beliefs, from fundamentalists to liberals
- Significant areas of dispute include:
  - Nature of the Bible
  - Role of women
  - Homosexuality
  - Relations with other religions

